

JUNE 2009 to AUGUST 2009

(Volume 27)





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This album starts from the end of June '09 but the albums are always made up later than when the photos are actually taken so this preamble is correspondingly from a slightly later date than the one shown on the cover

We are now rapidly approaching Rosh Hashanah and Mum is coming here with Larnie, Tammy & Ben and the following night DP is coming with the kids whilst Angela is in Spain gathering the harvest of olives and walnuts. It should be a great couple of days over the weekend. The weather changed from summer to a feeling of autumn in the air almost instantaneously on Sept 1st but we still go for our 'power-walk' round the lake most nights. (We have yet to beat the 30 minute time) .

The feeling that is apparent varies around the country. Many areas are feeling the effects of unemployment since the credit crunch (as it is now known) and obviously they feel differently to London where 'life goes on'. Many people I deal with say that business is ok but I think that like the general feeling in the country everyone is very aware of the incredible unprecedented levels of state borrowings and how the hell are we going to repay this debt. I feel that we are leaving a very real millstone around the necks of future generations. The sooner that our government loses the idea that we should continue to act like a superpower and start living within our means the quicker we will be a country that is envied ...not pitied. This is, after all the way in which we were encouraged to run our own lives. This possibly is what is at the root of our problems. The underlying attitude is that if something is wanted it should be available immediately and the 'old fashioned' idea of it being earned...being saved for ...and waiting..is a totally outdated concept. The pleasure of desiring something and waiting for it makes the acquisition of so much sweeter and, as a consequence, it is valued so much more.(eg the way we regularly polished our bikes at weekends- have you seen any kid actually doing that now??) It's easy to laugh at this attitude but it is a valid concept gained through seeing both sides of the equation. The value of anything 'earned' is far greater than when the same thing just 'acquired'

Why must we act like guardians of world peace and expose our young troops to warfare and death in countries that we know nothing about, where we are unwelcome, where we have not got the resources to arm and protect the troops and most importantly where we are not making the slightest difference. Are other countries exposing their troops in these battles, are they losing their men, I think not.. no-one understands why we are there and no-one seems to want to continue this pointless loss of life. Where is the majority will to pull out now..not a gradual withdrawal. The reasons given for our presence there does not convince or impress me. I honestly feel there is a hidden agenda. Otherwise why don't we get involved in other parts of the world with equal inequalities? I really think when anyone reads these words in time to come they will agree with me. Why should hindsight be the only way we learn. Listen to me and the many, like me, who are ordinary thinking people and get out now.

Let us develop an economy based on production and not imports. Let us encourage production of any raw materials that mean we are not totally dependent on other countries. It is common sense in life and in business and yet in politics it



seems that we are blind. Why allow our industry to rely on imported fuel. If we can't extract any more oil, coal etc, then go all out for nuclear fuel, wind-power or whatever it takes to protect us from being strangled by others. Let us produce more of our own food and let us return to producing consumables. Forget the cries of "no way" we must look at the bigger picture. The same way we should be independent...not part of the EU. BIG is not beautiful. BIG allows everyone to follow their own agenda and the 'common good' is ignored (if it was ever in the running) which I very much doubt. Expenses are hidden....a fantastic gravy trail for everyone on board. Accounts never have been signed off what more do we need to convince us that it is one great disaster in the making. Keep out UK. By being independent one develops a 'niche' status that as things get bigger is very desirable. We have always been innovators and envied worldwide. Let us re-invent the UK and let us be Little and Good - Not obese and devious....I know it makes sense and my disrespect for politicians and disappointment in the way we are spiralling down the plughole of world affairs is very real.

Finally, accept that we are a very small country with a world-wide reputation as being a 'soft touch'. Why else would people from distant shores travel through endless countries at great personal expense and danger to end up here. Surely we are not the best country...no..we are the easiest- The only solution is a totally firm immigration policy. We can not afford any more folk. "Sorry folks the UK is full." We have no more space and certainly no more money. Let NOW be the cut off point. No-one else to be allowed in. Sorry if that seems harsh but the alternative is harsher. No more dependents. No more key workers..no exceptions. A firm fair rigid border control with zero tolerance and while this is being executed how about getting rid of rubbish. We have become the cess pit of the world. Zero tolerance for convicted law breakers. Very quickly 'the soft touch' and easy laws of the UK would be a thing of the past. Yes..this sounds radical and it is easy to argue against my attitude but look at the alternatives and perhaps now is the time to make changes. This way we control them...a few years down the line and changes will be forced on us and they will be far worse than I am suggesting.

Finally Lynn has said for many years that London flooding will be a bigger disaster than we currently are considering. The very fact that the Thames Barrier has been used far more than anticipated added to the general flooding across the land leaving far worse damages to the economy than forecasted. When one sensibly considers the effect of flooding on our capital it is frightening. The first thing to go would be the transport system and closely followed by a rush on provisions that would reflect the general selfish nature of London. This would result in mayhem and despite the fact that I am sure disaster scenarios have been provided in the shape of duplicated mainstream offices that come on line where others are down the general panic would prevent many key workers getting there (or wanting to get there)...Enough of my doom and gloom – maybe just a reality check does one good

End of my rant... Sorry about this but it is a great way for me to express my feelings...think on dear reader...

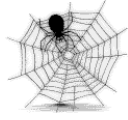


Trafalgar Square..the fourth plinth. - Sculptor Antony Gormley is asking the people of the UK to occupy the empty Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, a space normally reserved for statues of kings and generals, in an image of themselves, and a representation of the whole of humanity. This astonishing living monument is taking place from 6 July to 14 October 2009.. this is one of the first days at 6.00am and this is at night in September





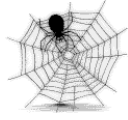
Sometimes the simplest subjects make the most striking shots



A moody sky in July



A small forgotten bit in Smithfield meat market



Some garden shots are magic...



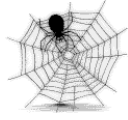


My commis for the day



The path from home to the sea...what a fantastic place to grow up





Kids you are so lucky.....







Great fun on the sea shore with Grandma and Grandpa









Beau, proudly showing his smart school cap



The harder the better for Peachie...



Last day at school.....



Showing Grandma the project work in its final glory....



Scoop...The kids actually washing their bikes and scooters



The gardens were full of buddleias and butterflies



Catering barbecue summer shots...

At an advertising agency in Chiswick



At a house in Woodside Park



At a school in East London (Mile End)





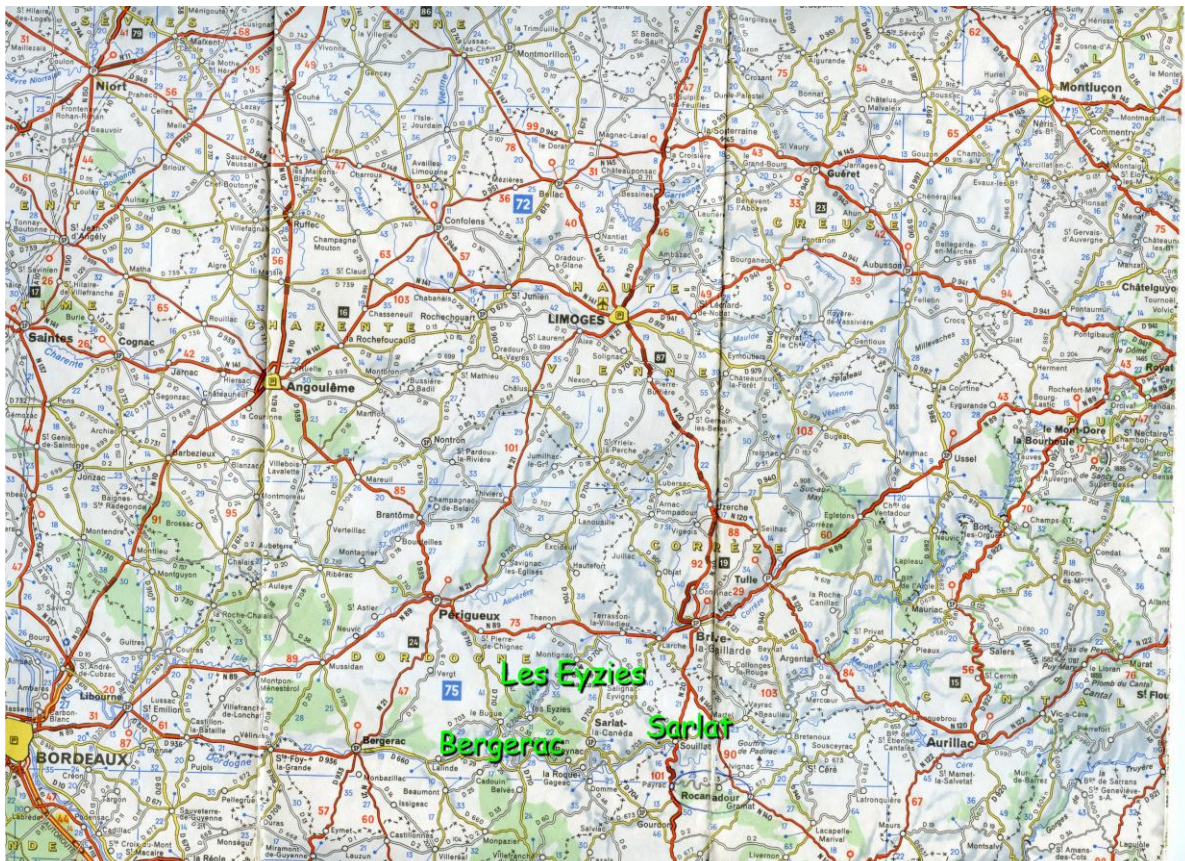
Great fun outside the National (South Bank) in July '09



Seen from the theatre balcony terrace



In August 2009 Larnie, Lynn and I went to the Dordogne. We flew to Bergerac where we picked up our car and drove to Les Eyzies (only found it thanks to our sat nav). We had booked a fabulous old mill cottage by a small stream at the end of a hidden track that followed the valley. It was even better than we had hoped for. There was a great pool that we shared with two other cottages and our accommodation was excellent





Just by the grassy area was a small stream with the occasional 'plop' as apples fell in
We made full use of our bbq and enjoyed the company of the great family in the adjacent cottage





The cottage was situated in a really magical area and we enjoyed walking and driving around the valleys





The local markets were a fantastic source of great food for our lunches and we all enjoyed the freshness and variety on offer. The displays were an inspiration and I think larnie enjoyed the totally different way of life





The gaufrette queen



Now that's what I call a tomato.....



and great cheeses to follow



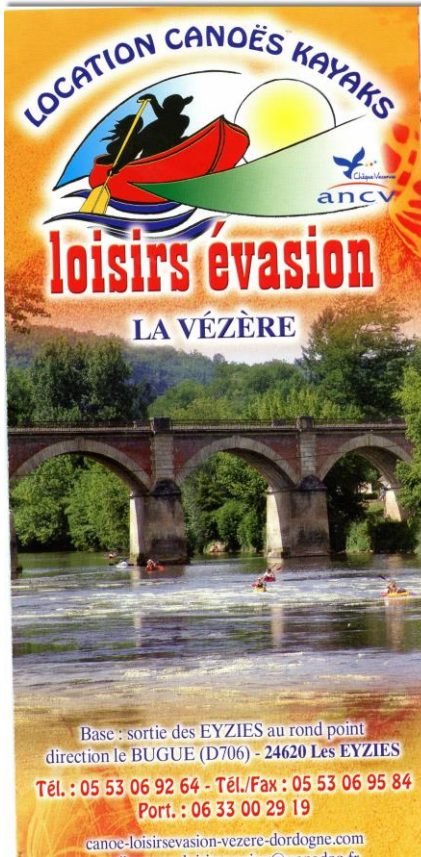
Close to the cottage was a small artisan pottery in a delightful setting





One of the great fun days was spent canoeing on the local river...

We got kitted out with buoyancy aids etc and were then driven upstream in the minibus. Once in the water we paddled for approx 3 hours downstream to where the car was parked.



Our belongings were all protected from the water in the screw-topped container which was just as well because it was a 'damp' day...

We did not stop laughing and once we got our act together we were a formidable force totally (?) in control of our canoe....well we got back didn't we !!!



Frequent stops on sandy beaches added to the fun and we met lots of families on the trip downstream



We swam with the strong current





A lunch stop in a pretty medieval town..





One evening we had a really great meal at a local restaurant where the food was wonderful and we ate in the garden. Larnie really enjoyed the atmosphere and she is really appreciating good food and is great fun to take out..





The beautiful town of Sarlat where the daytime market and the pavement nightlife were so enjoyable





An old fruit distillation cart from a local farm and the delights in the patisserie





Larnie was delighted to see that they had matched the seating to her pretty dress

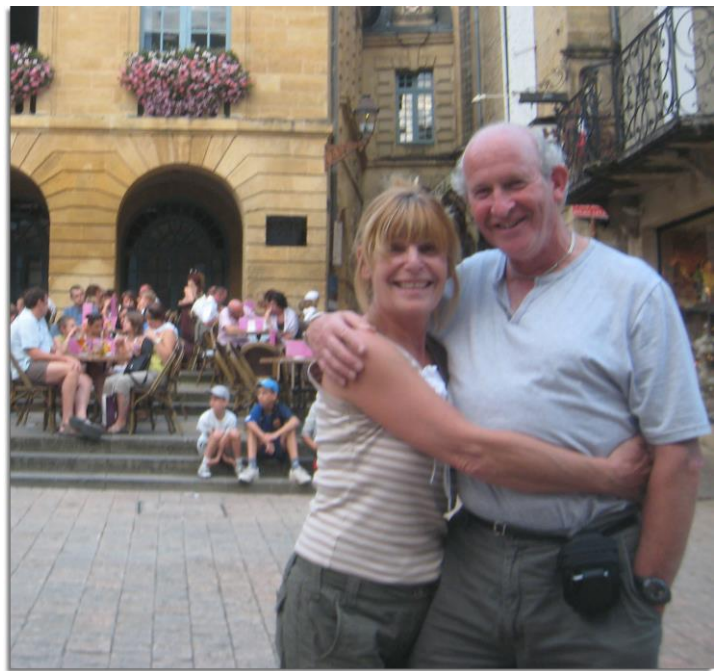


Heaven !!!



Even the cakes are colour co-ordinated





Lynn had to try pretty hard to get her arms round the expanding girth....

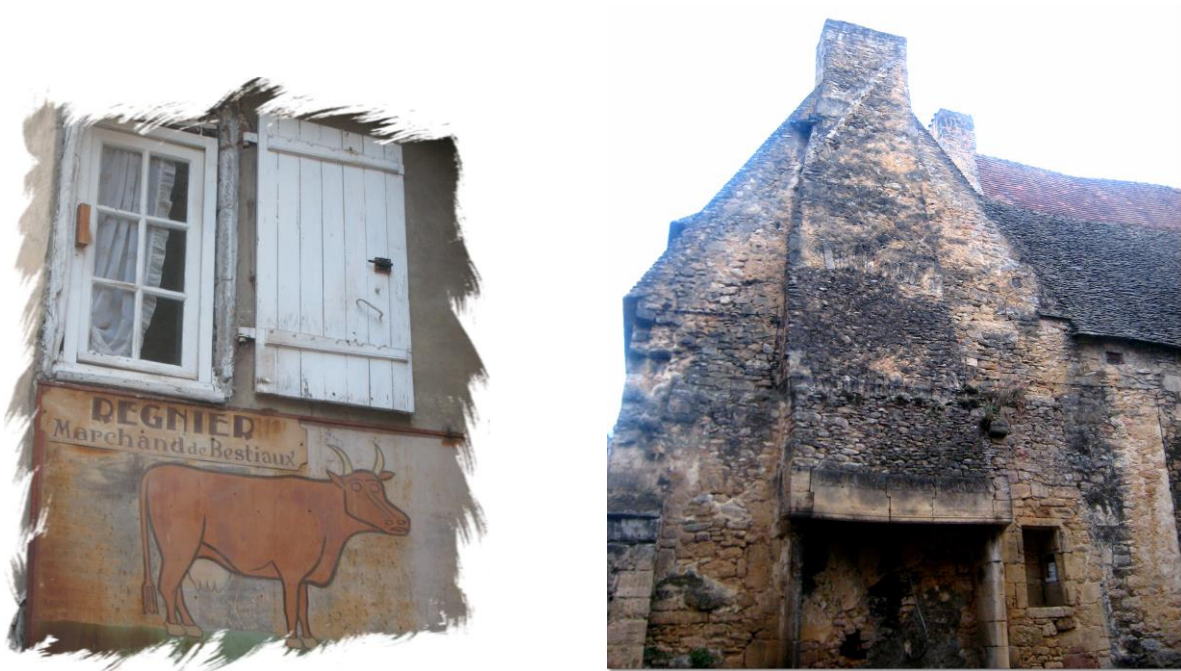






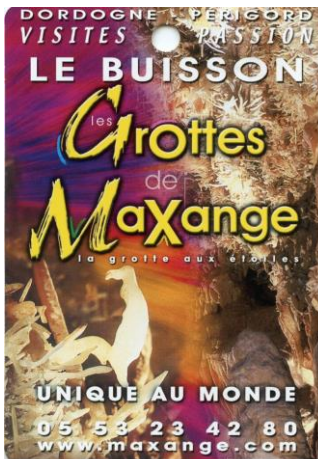


A friendly passer-by got a shot of us all together which is quite a rarity



A meal in the market square at night





A visit to this grotto was very interesting and it had been discovered when mining locally . The stalagmites and stalactites were discreetly illuminated in the passages as we walked through the caves and were spectacular



Along the river banks we watched the local fishermen having their (extremely small) catch weighed and we were amazed that the scales could register such a small catch





A boat trip on a traditional boat on the Dordogne at Bergerac was a wonderful end to a few days in a delightful area of France that we had not visited before



A wonderful harvest of damsons being loaded on the farm



In the local market...

